



**County of Moore  
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## **Introduction**

In order to help communicate with the citizens of Moore County, county Health Director Robert Wittmann, MPH has partnered with Paul Kuzma, MD to prepare a series of articles meant to inform the public about Covid-19 and public health. Dr. Kuzma has practiced medicine in Moore County for over 20 years and is currently completing his Masters of Public Health degree at Johns Hopkins University. This is the seventh in a series of articles prepared by Dr. Paul Kuzma to further public understanding of Covid-19

## **Demographics in Moore County**

Sometimes it seems difficult to remember what life was like before COVID. The year 2020 will be a touchstone in our lives that we will never forget. Future generations will learn about it in school. We will all have stories to share and experiences to remember. It is hard to believe that we are now only about 7 months into the COVID-19 pandemic. The first confirmed case in North Carolina was March 9<sup>th</sup> and the first case in Moore County was the following week. So much has changed since then.

COVID is the first pandemic to occur during the internet age and the amount of data and information that has been collected, analyzed and presented is almost inconceivable. We have real-time access to data each and every day that would have taken months or years to collect and process just a decade or two ago. Any one of us can sit down at our computer and within a few minutes can find information on the latest cases and deaths in any zip code in the United States. The information can be further broken down by age, or gender, or race or ethnicity or many other factors. All of this is freely available and easily accessed.

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, where I am currently enrolled in the Masters of Public Health program, has a database that collects and processes data from around the world and it is constantly updated in real time. It is online at: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/> and anyone who has not looked at it will be amazed at the amount of information that is available. North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services has a tremendous amount of state level information on their website at: <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/cases> , and Moore County has an excellent website with County level data that is updated daily at: <https://coronavirus-response-moorecounty.hub.arcgis.com/>.

***“To Protect and Promote Health through Prevention and Control of Disease and Injury.”***  
**<http://www.moorecountync.gov/health/>**

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Not too long ago we would have had to wait months or even years to get this type of information and it would have been published in databases or in journal articles that were not often seen by the general public. We are truly seeing the results of the information age. So what do we know?

### **Moore County Demographics**

Moore County has a population of approximately 96,000 people. Racial and ethnic data shows us that approximately, 80% of the population of Moore County is identified as white, 12% as Black, and 6% are Hispanic or Latino. Our age distribution is significantly older than the United States with almost 24% of the population of Moore County over the age of 65 as compared to about 17.5% for the population of the US.

### **Cases**

As of October 29<sup>th</sup>, we have had 2266 confirmed cases of COVID which is about 2.3% of our population. While the data on race and ethnicity is not complete, approximately 67% of people with COVID were classified as white and 17% as black. This is a significant difference from our overall racial distribution in Moore County with black citizens representing 12% of the population but 17% of the cases. Women represented 55% of the cases and men 45%.

When we look at age, we find that the 25-49 year old age group has the highest number of cases and represent about 27% of the confirmed cases. People over the age of 65 represent the second largest group with about 24% of the confirmed cases in this age group. The data on cases roughly mirrors the population distribution in the county.

### **Deaths**

The data available on the citizens of Moore County who have died of COVID show a similar pattern in regard to race. Approximately 70% of those who have died of COVID were identified as white and 21% identified as black. Men represented 45% of detected cases but 53% of deaths from COVID.

While the age distribution of cases is fairly representative of the population of the county, there is a dramatic difference in the data on deaths by age. In Moore county, as of October 29<sup>th</sup>, there have been no deaths in citizens less than 25, 1 death (2.3%) in the 25 to 49 age group, 5 deaths (11.6%) in the 50 to 64 age group, 8 deaths in the 65-75 (18.6) age group and 29 deaths (67.4%) in those older than 75. Of those people who died, 72% are listed as having at least 1 medical comorbidity and 28% are listed as unknown. 61% of those who died lived in a congregate living facility and 39% did not.

More comprehensive information and data is available on the Moore County Health Department website and the NC DHHS website for those who are interested in exploring it more deeply.

While this data only provides a snapshot of what is happening in Moore County, it is useful for us to understand how this disease is impacting the citizens of our home county. The trends we see in Moore County are broadly consistent with what we are seeing at the state and national levels. Older people, particularly those over 75 and those living in congregate living facilities are at the highest risk of death. People identified as black also are at higher risk. Medical comorbidities are also an important factor in the outcome of those who become ill. If you or a loved one falls into one of these higher risk categories it is important that you take as many precautions as possible to avoid becoming infected with COVID. Hopefully an effective vaccine will be available soon and those in the high risk categories will be given priority in receiving it. Until then, practice social distancing, wear a mask when in public, and wash your hands.